

## Foreword

In school we are taught how to earn it. Then for most of the rest of our lives we're making it. We invest countless hours in thought and discussion deciding how to deal with it. We walk around shopping centres determining how we're going to spend it. We worry about not having enough of it. We dream and scheme to work out how to acquire more of it.

Arguments over it are a leading cause for the breakdown in marriages. Despair over it has even led to suicide. Passion for it causes much of society's crime. The absence of it causes society's nightmares. Some view it as the root of all evil and others think of it as a means for great good.

One thing is clear: We cannot afford to ignore the reality of the importance of money.

On a daily basis Christians wrestle with how to handle their personal finances. Thankfully, there is no shortage of information in the Bible. More than 2000 scriptures touch on the theme of money. Jesus spoke about it frequently. Around two thirds of Jesus' parables make reference to our use of our financial resources. Jesus cautioned that where our treasure is our hearts would be also. He talked about these matters because he knew what was at stake. He knew that, left to our own devices, this would become a source of pain and frustration and sometimes bondage. Worse, he saw how easily our hearts would be led astray from pure devotion to God into areas of worry over possessions. He wanted to protect us from these pitfalls and show us the freedom that comes from following Him fully in every area of life, including this one.



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## Introduction

At Edge Church we endeavour to equip you in your journey towards a Christ-centred life. We believe that life is not to be lived in compartments, but that Christ touches and redeems every area of our lives as we journey with Him.

In this introductory section, we trust the exercises will assist you in identifying:

- what motivates your relationship with money,
- the influence of your family of origin on your relationship with money,
- your financial situation in a nutshell, and
- your goals for this course as well as your financial goals.

## Course Objectives

The course goal is to develop and commit to a biblically based spending plan by:

- Becoming aware of the myths of our culture that have influenced our thinking
- Understanding financial biblical principles that should guide us
- Developing a spending plan in the five different areas of earning, giving saving, debt and spending
- Selecting a record keeping system
- Committing to implementing the spending plan and record keeping system

## Course Guidelines

- Participation in discussion will assist in internalising the material and will aid in the learning process. Learn from each other.
- Give all in the group an opportunity to contribute. Don't dominate discussion.
- Participants are to share at their level of comfort. Specific details of your financial position are best kept personal.
- Confidentiality is very important. What members of the group share, is not to go outside the group under any circumstances.
- Unsolicited advice, faultfinding and criticising of self or other group members has no place in the group.
- Ask questions at appropriate opportunities. Don't assume that any question is a silly one.

## Discover your personal money motivations:

A look at these primary money drives will give you important clues to your behavior (and your spouse's, if you're married). What does money mean to each of you? What sparks that urge to make or spend it? Or to fight about it?

1. Money is important because it allows me to...
  - a. Do what I want to do.
  - b. Feel secure
  - c. Get ahead in life.
  - d. Buy things for others.
2. I feel that money ...
  - a. Frees up my time.
  - b. Can solve my problems.
  - c. Is a means to an end
  - d. Helps make relationships smoother.
3. When it comes to saving money, I...
  - a. Don't have a plan and don't often save.
  - b. Have a plan and stick to it.
  - c. Don't have a plan but manage to save anyway.
  - d. Don't make enough money to save
4. If someone asks about my personal finances, I...
  - a. Feel defensive.
  - b. Realize I need more education and information.
  - c. Feel comfortable and competent
  - d. Would rather talk about something else.
5. When I make a major purchase, I...
  - a. Go with what my intuition tells me.
  - b. Research a great deal before buying
  - c. Feel I'm in charge - it's my/our money.
  - d. Ask friends/family first.
6. If I have money left over at the end of the month, I...
  - a. Go out and have a good time
  - b. Put the money into savings
  - c. Look for a good investment.
  - d. Buy a gift for someone.
7. If I discover I paid more for something than a friend did I ...
  - a. Couldn't care less
  - b. Feel it's okay because I also find bargains at times.
  - c. Assume they spent more time shopping, and time is money.
  - d. Feel upset and angry at myself.
8. When paying bills, I ...
  - a. Put it off and sometimes forget.
  - b. Pay them when due, but no sooner.
  - c. Pay when I get to it, but don't want to be hassled.
  - d. Worry that my credit will suffer if I miss a payment.

9. When it comes to borrowing money I ...
  - a. Simply won't - don't like to feel indebted.
  - b. Only borrow as a last resort.
  - c. Tend to borrow from banks or other business sources.
  - d. Ask friends and family because they know I'll pay.
  
10. When eating out with friends I prefer to ...
  - a. Divide the bill proportionately.
  - b. Ask for separate checks.
  - c. Charge the bill to my bankcard and have others pay me.
  - d. Pay the entire bill because I like to treat my friends.
  
11. When it comes to tipping I ...
  - a. Sometimes do and sometimes don't.
  - b. Just call me Scrooge.
  - c. Resent it, but always tip the right amount.
  - d. Tip generously because I like to be well thought of.
  
12. If I suddenly came into a lot of money, I ...
  - a. Wouldn't have to work.
  - b. Wouldn't have to worry about the future.
  - c. Could really build up my business.
  - d. Would spend a lot on family and friends and enjoy time with them more.
  
13. When indecisive about a purchase I often tell myself ...
  - a. It's only money.
  - b. It's a bargain.
  - c. It's a good investment.
  - d. He/she will love it.
  
14. In our family ...
  - a. I do/will handle all the money and pay all the bills.
  - b. My partner does/will take care of the finances.
  - c. I do/will pay my bills and my partner will do the same.
  - d. We do/will sit down together to pay bills.

Score: Tally your answers to questions 1-14 by the letter of your answer:

a. _____	c. _____
b. _____	d. _____

## Money motivations explained:

Money means different things to different people based upon a variety of factors such as temperament and life's experiences. Often the meaning of money and the way in which it motivates us is subtle and something of which we are not readily conscious.

The simple quiz you took gives an indication of the relative strength of the four main "money motivations" for you. The motivations are, Freedom, Security, Power and Love. None of the motivations are inherently good or bad, although in relationship to money each certainly has its dark side. And all of human experience has proven that money itself, while it often makes the promise, does not provide lasting Freedom, Security, Power or Love.

The key to your Money Motivation is reflected in the relative number of your a, b, c or d answers.

- "a" answers are indicative that money relates to **FREEDOM**. You tend to be a free lancer at heart and to you money means that you have the freedom to do what you would like.
- "b" answers are indicative that money relates to **SECURITY**. You need to feel safe and secure and you desire the stability and protection that money supposedly provides.
- "c" answers have to do with **POWER**. Personal success and control are important to you, and you appreciate the power that money sometimes provides.
- "d" answers indicate that for you money relates to **LOVE**. You like to use money to express love and build relationships. Relationships are a top priority.

One of the keys to managing our money wisely is to understand our relationship to it. Hopefully this exercise gave you some additional insights which you will find helpful. You may wish to share your scores with your spouse or a friend and discuss whether their perceptions of "your money motivation" are consistent with your scores.

**Bonus questions:**

1. What are some of your earliest memories of money? Growing up, did you feel rich or poor or neither? What is the first money you recall earning; how did you earn it and how did you spend it?

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2. How was money handled in your family? Who handled money / bills? Was money discussed? Was money abundant or scarce? How did your family express generosity?

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3. Who are your current money management role models?

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4. In your present family, who handles the money and how do they handle the money? Is money discussed? Is money abundant or scarce? How does your family express generosity?

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## Your financial situation in a nutshell

Typically we find ourselves in one of four financial situations:

- Crisis
- One salary from disaster
- Good financial shape
- God-honouring lifestyle

### **Crisis**

Some of us are experiencing serious financial problems. It takes courage to face financial problems. Confronting these issues is a big step and working through these needs to happen in a safe environment. There is hope for all of us in crisis.

### **One Salary from Disaster**

Others of us are not experiencing any immediate crisis and from a distance things appear to be OK. In reality, we are living from salary to salary. We are tired of our debt being too high and our salary being too low. If something had to go wrong financially, the potential is disastrous. You want a firm grip on your finances and to develop a lifestyle that will pull you back from the edge of disaster.

### **Good Financial Shape**

Another group of us are in pretty good shape. You are not in lots of consumer debt, you save regularly and invest wisely. From a financial standpoint, you are a good money manager, but you may not be honouring God with your financial resources. You're seeking to fully understand what it means to live a financial lifestyle from a Christian perspective.

### **God-honouring Lifestyle**

And a few of us have already applied all the biblical principles and you are handling your finances in a God-honouring way. You hope to affirm your actions and bring you to an even deeper understanding of God's call on your life.

Irrespective of our financial situation, whether we have a little less or a little more, we recognize that our relationship with money is a powerful thing. It influences where we live, where we work, who we have as friends and how we use our time.

Despite where you currently find yourself, you can experience the peace, joy and freedom that come through following what the Bible has to say about money.

## Goals

Your goals become the basis for shaping your budget, and they will serve as a motivating factor for your following through in the months ahead. Given your view of the financial position you are in, please give serious consideration to your goals. Carefully considered realistic goals, which flow out of what's really important to you, are powerful motivators. That motivation will be very helpful to you in following through on the steps necessary to achieve your goals.

### Overall Goal:

My overall goal in attending this course is:

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### Specific goals I would like to achieve are:

(Check appropriate boxes and write in detail on the lines given.)

- Pay off debt: \_\_\_\_\_
- Save for a major purchase (home, car, other): \_\_\_\_\_
- Save for a dream vacation: \_\_\_\_\_
- Save for emergencies: \_\_\_\_\_
- Save to replace items that may wear out (major appliances, home repairs, car): \_\_\_\_\_
- Save for college/study expenses: \_\_\_\_\_
- Save for retirement: \_\_\_\_\_
- Increase my giving to the Lord and His church: \_\_\_\_\_
- Increase other giving: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## The financial dilemma

In this section we will contrast the impact of culture that shapes our financial lifestyles with a God-honouring Biblical perspective.

**1. Let's list some of the messages reinforced by our culture:**

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**2. Where have these myths led us?**

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**3. What does the Bible say about money?**

We came into the world with nothing, and we will leave the world with nothing. Everything that we have in the interim has been entrusted to us by a loving God who created all things and retained ownership of everything he created.

God created everything  
(Genesis 1:1)

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God owns everything  
(Haggai 2:8; Psalm 50:10, 12b; Psalm 24:1)

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We are stewards / trustees  
(1 Corinthians 4:1-2; Matthew 25:21)

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**4. How much belongs to God?**

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**5. How much does he allow me to manage?**

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**6. How am I to manage the entire amount?**

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**7. How can I do that?**

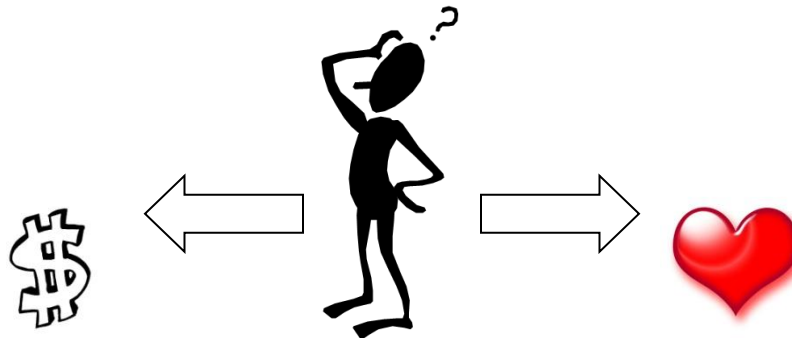
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## Culture Clash!

The pull of culture versus the mind and heart of God



So how do we look at this dilemma from a Biblical standpoint? Matthew 6:24 says, “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.”

Culture shouts that we will find freedom, fulfilment, contentment and peace through things. Wear me, buy me, drink me, drive me, and I’ll make you happy and successful and will shower you with relationships. Money is seen as the means to these things. Culture also pushes us to take it to the limit and live as close to the edge as possible.

In contrast, God doesn’t shout, but his mind and heart calls us in a still small voice and invites us to be faithful to Him. Financial peace and contentment is the by-product of faithfulness. Matthew 6:33 says, “seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.”

The Bible is very clear that we cannot serve two masters and that we need to make a choice. The Bible is also clear about where our choices lead. In Matthew 25:14-30 Jesus tells us the parable of the talents in which servants who used resources wisely were commended as “good and faithful servants”.

In contrast, Jesus also tells the parable of the rich young fool in Luke 12:13-20 where the wealthy farmer who hoarded his goods and built bigger barns to store his excess was called a “fool” and that his life would be required of him that night. Giving in to the pull of culture leads to foolishness.

These parables shed light on two great truths:

- God holds us accountable for how we manage the money and possessions entrusted to us.
- We will either be found faithful or foolish

In fact, when money is treated like a god, we allow it to have control over us. Scripture refers to this god as Mammon. Typical symptoms which appear when Mammon is in control include worry or anxiety over money, mismanagement of money, consistent financial lack, an “I can’t afford it” mentality, impulse buying, stinginess, greed, discontentment, bondage to debt or an exaggerated emphasis on money.

Are we going to live as God intended or are we going to allow culture or Mammon to determine how we live?

God doesn’t just leave us ill-equipped to live as he intended, he gives us principles in His word about how to live. We need to look at what the Bible says about earning, giving, saving, debt and spending and how we can be faithful in each of these areas.

Faithfulness allows us to become:

- A diligent earner
- A generous giver
- A wise saver
- A cautious debtor
- A prudent consumer

When we become these things and surrender everything to God, we honour him in increasing measure.

We experience blessing and contentment by managing our financial resources according to God’s purposes and principles.

Financial faithfulness leads to a blessed life.

## Spending plan

A spending plan is a practical tool that helps guide the decisions we have made in our mind and heart. A spending plan (budget) represents how we plan to allocate our financial resources. It helps us plan to reach our goals and live out our priorities. Our spending plan more accurately describes what it is.

**1. Why do we resist working with a budget?**

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**2. Why would we say a spending plan has the ability to produce freedom?**

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**3. List a few things a spending plan helps us to do:**

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A spending plan is for everyone,  
not just for those in financial difficulty

## Earning

Let's consider how the pull of culture affects our thinking about earning and what the Bible has to say about earning.

Culture tells us that our value is measured by the size of our salary and the nature of our position. It tells us that if we just had a better job and earned a little more that our problems would be solved.

A diligent earner is one who produces with diligence and purpose and is content and grateful for what he or she has

**1. What does Scripture say about our value?**

(Genesis 1:28; Luke 12:15)

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**2. What does Scripture say about work?**

(Colossians 3:23; 1 Timothy 5:8; Deuteronomy 8:18)

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**3. What does Scripture say about contentment?**

(1 Timothy 6:6-8; Phil 4:10-13; Ecclesiastes 5:18-19; 1 Timothy 6:17-19)


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 Activity: Complete the income category on the spending plan. (Annexure 2). This should be net salary(ies) after taxes and deductions.

Listen for the tips about:

- two incomes
- variable income

Notes:

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## Giving

We are made to give. We are created in the image of God, and God is a loving and generous being. Therefore, we will only be fully satisfied when we are sharing with others.

Giving is a matter of the heart. It is a grateful response to God's ownership of all we have.

A generous giver is one who gives with an obedient will, a joyful attitude and a compassionate heart.

**1. What are the typical emotions experienced about giving?**

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**2. What does culture say about giving?**

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**3. What does Scripture say about giving?**

(James 1:17; Matthew 6:19-20a, 23b-33; 2 Corinthians 8:13-14; Genesis 12:2-3;)

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In addition to the biblical reasons to give, it is evident that the act of giving is the most effective way to break the powerful hold that money can otherwise have on us.

**4. How much should I give?**

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**5. When should I give?**

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**6. Where should I tithe?**

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Is this not legalism? Are we not under grace? Liberty is not lawlessness. It is not freedom to do anything. Liberty is the freedom to do the right thing. Love dictates that I should give liberally. Loyalty directs that I should give locally. That's not legalism but liberty. Not a "must" but a "may". God loves a cheerful giver.

**7. What is the issue with stressing the 10% versus the attitude of the heart? (1 Corinthians 13; Matthew 23:23)**

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**8. What's wrong with giving to receive?**

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Activity: Complete the giving category on the spending plan. (Annexure 2). This should be tithes, offerings and funds set aside for discretionary giving (excludes Birthday and Christmas presents).

## Saving

While we are to depend on God as our ultimate source of security and not on money, the Bible encourages us to plan for the future and for the unexpected by saving wisely. But while it is wise to save for appropriate goals, it is sinful to hoard.

A wise saver is one who builds, preserves and invests with discernment.

**1. What does culture say about saving?**

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**2. What does Scripture say about saving?**  
(Proverbs 21:20; Proverbs 6:8)

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**3. What's the difference between saving and hoarding?**  
(Luke 12:16-21; Ecclesiastes 5:10)

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## Saving – let’s be practical

Scripture supports the cumulative effect of a little effort over a long period of time. “Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!... it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest” (Proverbs 6:8). In Corinthians 9:25, it recognises that consistent effort produces a reward. Financially, a little saving, over time, will produce a financial reward.

Despite this, we are not keen savers.

FACT: As a nation we save 0.2% of our income

### Cumulative effect

The table below illustrates the cumulative effect of a little money, just one rand a day, can have over a forty-five year career depending on whether it is saved or added to a debt.

### Rand a day

Years	Piggy Bank	Invested @ 10%	Debt @ 20%
5	1 825	2 329	-2 957
10	3 650	6 080	-1 316
15	5 475	12 121	-28 626
20	7 300	21 849	-74 190
25	9 125	37 518	-187 566
30	10 950	62 752	-469 481
35	12 775	103 391	-1 171 674
40	14 600	168 842	-2 918 457
45	16 425	274 250	-7 265 012

The cumulative effect should impact our decision on whether or not to purchase an item. The difference between saving in advance for an item and incurring debt to purchase an item immediately results in a substantial difference in the actual cost of the item.

**Start Young**

While young adults might feel that they are at the start of a career and that they might not have much, the greatest asset they have is time. A little saved from a young age makes a significant difference to the future.

<p>Save <b>R100</b> per month          During first <b>15 years</b> of career          Save <b>nothing</b> more          For <b>25 years</b>          With <b>10% return</b>          Results in savings of  <b>R431 702</b></p>	<p>Save <b>nothing</b>          During first <b>15 years</b> of career          Save <b>R100</b> per month          For <b>25 years</b>          With <b>10% return</b>          Results in savings of  <b>R123 332</b></p>
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**It's never too late**

It's never too late to start. Saving a little is always better than not saving at all.

**Practical Tip:**

Savings are money you keep. When you buy an R250 item on sale for R150, you did not save R100. You spent R150. Savings are not funds we have lost or given up. Saving is a form of spending. It is making funds available for future spending.

So what do we need to save for?

**Four kinds of saving**

**Emergency**

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**Replacement**

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**Long Term**

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**Annual payments**

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Activity: Complete the saving category on the spending plan. (Annexure 2). This should include policies and RA's (long-term savings), and funds for emergencies, replacement of goods, and annual payments.



## Debt

The Bible is clear that we are to repay our debts, but it is wiser still to avoid debt.

A Cautious debtor is one who avoids entering into debt, is careful and strategic when incurring debt, and always repays debt.

**1. What does culture say about debt?**

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**2. What does Scripture say about debt?**

(Psalm 37:21; Proverbs, 22:7; Romans 13:7; James 4:14; Luke 12:15)

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## Debt – let’s be practical

In SA, debt repayments make up 65% of our disposable income.

Some non-consumer related debt is appropriate, but all debt is seductive. For example, debt related to the purchase of a home which implies repayments that are beyond your means, is not appropriate.

It is helpful to consider different types of debt.

- Home
- Car
- Education
- Business
- Credit Card / Consumer Debt

### 3. Consumer debt is most dangerous. Why do you think that is?

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We must acknowledge that in some cases debt has occurred for reasons beyond our control, a medical emergency, an unavoidable job loss, etc., and we are very sensitive to those situations. However, many of us are in debt because we didn’t have a plan, and we let culture pull us out of control, we are not living within our means and are unable to resist the temptation of immediate gratification. In these cases debt is not the problem, it is a symptom.

It is important to take whatever steps are necessary to discover and eliminate the root issues, seeking assistance and accountability.

### Compound Interest

We don't fully realise the impact of compound interest on debt and the impact of paying only the minimum balance due.

Example: A person owes R7200 @ 23% interest with no further purchases

You Pay	Total Paid	Months
Min (initially R504)	R9826.83	93 months (7 yr 9 mths)
Min + R450	R7973.12	12 months
R450	R8681.81	20 months

So then, how do you work effectively with a credit card, as it is a safe, convenient method of payment?

### Credit Card Guidelines

- Pay it in full each month
- Know what is on it and stick to what you planned to spend
- Have only 1 card
- Cut it up if it becomes a problem; use a debit card instead

Should you have consumer debt that needs to be reduced, there are some helpful guidelines to develop a debt repayment plan.



Activity: Complete the debt repayment plan. (Annexure 3). This will assist you in developing your personalised debt repayment plan. These repayment amounts can then be transferred to the Debt Category in your Spending Plan. Complete the debt category on the spending plan. (Annexure 2). This should be the monthly repayment amount for each debt.

### Establishing a Debt Repayment Plan

1. Recognise the problem; seek forgiveness
2. Make a start - establish a spending plan that frees up funds for debt reduction
3. Determine whether any assets can be sold to kick-start the process
4. List all your debts (see Annexure 3)
5. Pay the minimum payment on all debts and the maximum additional possible on the smallest debt.
6. As each debt is paid off, roll the total amount you were paying to the next largest debt.
7. Continue this strategy until all debts are paid
8. Incur no new debt
9. Discard credit card(s), if problematic
10. Celebrate reaching milestones, modestly, of course.

## Spending

As Christians, we are called to live with moderation and discipline and to be content with what we have. We must recognise that materialism is a competing theology in which things become idols and greed becomes a driving force.

A prudent consumer is one who enjoys the fruits of their labour, yet guards against materialism.

**1. What does culture say about spending?**

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**2. What does Scripture say about spending?**

(Deuteronomy 5:8; Romans 1:25; Luke 12:15; Philippians 4:12)

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**3. How would you rate your standard of living?**

- Too high    Comfortable    Acceptable    Too low

4. What is wrong with the statement “So long as I can afford it, I can have it.”?

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5. What is your understanding of an acceptable Christian standard of living?

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## Spending – let's be practical

The Bible does not give absolute guidelines on when enough is enough, but there are principles which provide guidance for making wise financial decisions or evaluating a desire to purchase something. It should always start with the right attitude informed by the heart and mind of Christ. A simple practice is to pray about every significant financial purchase and wait overnight (or longer) before you commit.

Typical expenditure areas include the following:

- Housing
- Car/Transport
- Insurance
- Household
- Clothing
- Gifts (refer Annexure 4 for gifts list)
- Education
- Telephone/Cell
- Professional Services (medical)
- Entertainment
- Petty Items
- Bad habits



Activity: Complete each expenses category on the Spending Plan (Annexure 2).

## Balancing the plan / making adjustments

After subtracting giving, saving, debt repayments and spending from income, there are one of three results:

- Income is equal to expenditure
- Income exceeds expenditure
- Expenditure exceeds income

There are three ways to adjust your spending plan if your outflow exceeds your income:

- Increase income
- Sell assets to pay some debt
- Reduce Expenses

“There are two ways to get enough: One is to accumulate more and more, the other is to desire less.”  
GK Chesterton

We need to remember that our earning ability should not be the only constraint on our standard of living and our spending patterns/ Assuming our income is equal to our expenditure, the temptation is that future salary increases are used to increase our standing of living, rather than keeping our standard of living a closed circle.

It is important to carefully and prayerfully consider the spending plan and ensure that you have peace about the financial decisions and plans you are putting in place.

In balancing the plan, it is important to keep in mind our desired priorities, even if transitional priorities are necessary for a period of time.

### Priorities

Typical	Desired	Transitional
1. Lifestyle	1. Give	1. Give... something
2. Save	2. Save	2. Save... a little
3. ? Give	3. Lifestyle	3. Debt... maximise payment
		4. Lifestyle... spartan

**1. What tends to happen to lifestyle as income increases over time?**

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**Draw graph of income and expenditure over time. (Andy Stanley)**

**2. What is the impact of a lack of financial margins on a person's sense of well-being?**

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**3. How does this affect my mind and heart and a spirit of generosity?**

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 Activity: To assess your assets and total liability, complete Annexure 5 “What I own and what I owe”

 Activity: Adjust expenditure items until the plan is balanced.

**Questions to ponder at home:**

**4. What will happen to your next raise?**

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**5. How is God nudging you to modify your giving?**

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**6. What is one step you can take to begin limiting your most significant money tendency impact?**

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**7. What is one action step you want to take with your credit card?**

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8. Select three of the categories in the area of “household, personal and entertainment” that you think have the greatest potential to be reduced. Then record one idea you have that may work for you.

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9. Upon completion of your spending plan draft, income will be greater or less than expenses. Write down one or more steps you need to take to bring your plan into balance.

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“I have held many things in my hands and I have lost them all, but whatever I have placed in God’s hands, that I still possess.  
Martin Luther

## Record keeping

Simply put, a record keeping systems keeps track of how much you spend. It checks what we actually spend against the plan.

### 1. Why do we need a record keeping system?

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Record keeping is usually the stumbling block in the process for many people.

It's simpler than it seems.  
It takes less time than you think.  
A degree in maths is not required.

There are several approaches:

- Envelope
- Written (Annexure 6)
- Electronic

### 2. The benefits of record keeping are as follows:

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## **Commitment**

It is important to make a commitment to implement your plan.

When we implement our part, we often see that things progress more quickly than expected. It's amazing to see the number of ways God works when His principles are put into action. We cannot predict how God will choose to act, but we do know that He will be pleased and will honour the fact that you commit this process to Him and to follow His principles.

By following His principles, life can be better. We can live a Blessed Life.

## My Commitment

- I will pray daily for God’s guidance and help
- I will seek assistance, if needed.
- I will be aware of the myths of our culture that influence my thinking
- I will comply with the financial biblical principles that should guide me
- I will develop and implement a Spending Plan in the areas of earning, giving, saving, debt and spending for at least 90 days.
- I will select and implement a record keeping system.

I will begin implementing my Spending Plan and Record Keeping by:

D	D	M	M	Y	Y	Y	Y
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My accountability partner will be \_\_\_\_\_

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

## **Annexures**

- 1. Biblical financial principles**
- 2. Spending plan**
- 3. Debt repayment plan**
- 4. Gift list**
- 5. What you own and what you owe**
- 6. Spending record**

## **Annexure 1: Biblical financial principles**

### **Cultivate a Steward's Mindset**

#### **GOD CREATED EVERYTHING**

In the beginning there was nothing, and God created (Genesis 1:1).

#### **GOD OWNS EVERYTHING**

“‘The silver is mine and the gold is mine,’ declares the LORD Almighty” (Haggai 2:8). “Every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills” (Psalm 50:10). “The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it” (Psalm 24:1). Flowing out of the fact that God created and owns everything is the logical conclusion that whatever we possess is not really ours, but belongs to God; we are simply entrusted with our possessions. Therefore, we are trustees, not owners. Although 1 Corinthians 4 (quoted below) does not directly refer to material possessions, its counsel is applicable to this aspect of life as well.

#### **WE ARE TRUSTEES**

“A person who is put in charge as a manager must be faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:2, NLT).

#### **WE CAN'T SERVE TWO MASTERS**

“No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money” (Matthew 6:24, NLT).

#### **USE RESOURCES WISELY**

“His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’” (Matthew 25:21).

#### **PURSUE BIBLICAL FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE**

“Buy the truth and do not sell it; get wisdom, discipline and understanding” (Proverbs 23:23). “Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed” (Proverbs 15:22).

#### **MEASURABLE GOALS AND REALISTIC PLANS**

“Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed” (Proverbs 16:3).

#### **TRUSTWORTHINESS MATTERS**

“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own?” (Luke 16:10-12).

### **Earning**

The Diligent Earner – One who produces with diligence and purpose and is content and grateful for what he or she has.

God established work while Adam and Eve were yet in the Garden of Eden. God invited them to join him in the ongoing act of caring for creation. Work came before the fall of Adam and Eve and is a blessing, not a curse. All work has dignity. Our work should be characterized by the following principles.

#### **BE DILIGENT; SERVE GOD**

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord” (Colossians 3:23).

**PROVIDE FOR OURSELVES AND THOSE DEPENDENT ON US**

“Those who won’t care for their relatives, especially those in their own household, have denied the true faith. Such people are worse than unbelievers” (1 Timothy 5:8).

**BE GRATEFUL; REMEMBER FROM WHOM INCOME REALLY COMES**

“Remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth” (Deuteronomy 8:18).

**ENJOY YOUR WORK; BE CONTENT IN IT**

“...It is good for people to eat, drink, and enjoy their work under the sun during the short life God has given them, and to accept their lot in life. And it is a good thing to receive wealth from God and the good health to enjoy it. To enjoy your work and accept your lot in life – this is indeed a gift from God” (Ecclesiastes 5:18-19 NLT).

**BE TRANSFORMED WORKERS**

“Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart” (Ephesians 6:5-6).

**EARN POTENTIAL, SHARE EXCESS**

“If you are a thief, quit stealing. Instead, use your hands for good, hard work, and then give generously to others in need” (Ephesians 4:28 NLT).

## **Giving**

The Generous Giver – One who gives with an obedient will, a joyful attitude, and a compassionate heart.

**WE ARE MADE TO GIVE**

We are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). God is gracious and generous. We will lead a more satisfied and fulfilled life.

**GIVE AS A RESPONSE TO GOD’S GOODNESS**

“Every good and perfect gift is from above...” (James 1:17).  
Therefore, we give out of gratefulness for what we have received.

**GIVE TO FOCUS ON GOD AS OUR SOURCE AND SECURITY**

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6:33).

**GIVE TO HELP ACHIEVE ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

“Our desire is ... that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need” (2 Corinthians 8:13-14).  
Throughout Scripture, God expresses his concern for the poor and calls us to share with those less fortunate.

**GIVE TO BLESS OTHERS**

“I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.” (Genesis 12:2). If we are blessed with resources beyond our needs, it is not for the purpose of living more lavishly but to bless others. We are blessed to be a blessing.

**BE WILLING TO SHARE**

“Command them [the rich] to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share” (1 Timothy 6:18).



**GIVE TO BREAK THE HOLD OF MONEY**

Another reason to give is that doing so breaks the hold that money might otherwise have on us. While the Bible doesn't specifically say so, it is evident that persons who give freely and generously are not controlled by money but have freedom.

**GIVE JOYFULLY, GENEROUSLY, IN A TIMELY MANNER**

"Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints" (2 Corinthians 8:2-4).

**GIVE WISELY**

"We want to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this liberal gift" (2 Corinthians 8:20).

**GIVE EXPECTANTLY AND CHEERFULLY**

"...The one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves a person who gives cheerfully" (2 Corinthians 9:6-7 NLT; see also verses 10-14).

**MOTIVES FOR GIVING ARE IMPORTANT**

Unless our motives are right, we can give all we have – even our bodies as sacrifices – and it will be for naught (1 Cor. 13). We can be scrupulous with tithing and still not have the right motives. Jesus rebuked the religious leaders of his day for this very thing: "...You hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices – mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law – justice, mercy and faithfulness" (Matthew 23:23).

## Saving

The Wise Saver – One who builds, preserves, and invests with discernment.

**IT IS WISE TO SAVE**

"The wise store up choice food and oil, but fools gulp theirs down." (Proverbs 21:20 TNIV). "Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest" (Proverbs 6:6-8).

**IT IS SINFUL TO HOARD**

"Then he told them a story: 'A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops. He said to himself, "What should I do? I don't have room for all my crops." Then he said, "I know! I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll have room enough to store all my wheat and other goods. And I'll sit back and say to myself, 'My friend, you have enough stored away for years to come. Now take it easy! Eat, drink, and be merry!'" But God said to him, "You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get everything you worked for?" Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God'" (Luke 12:16-21 NLT).

**CALCULATE COST; PRIORITIZE**

"But don't begin until you count the cost. For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it? Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of money, and then everyone would laugh at you. They would say, 'There's the person who started that building and couldn't afford to finish it!'" (Luke 14:28-30 NLT).

**AVOID GET-RICH-QUICK SCHEMES**

"The trustworthy person will get a rich reward, but a person who wants quick riches will get into trouble" (Proverbs 28:20 NLT).

**SEEK WISE COUNSELORS**

“Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance” (Proverbs 1:5).

**ESTABLISH A JOB BEFORE BUYING HOME**

“Finish your outdoor work and get your fields ready; after that, build your house” (Proverbs 24:27).

**DIVERSIFY YOUR HOLDINGS**

“Give portions to seven, yes to eight, for you do not know what disaster may come upon the land” (Eccles. 11:2).

## **Debt**

The Cautious Debtor – One who avoids entering into debt, is careful and strategic when incurring debt, and always repays debt.

**REPAY DEBT AND DO SO PROMPTLY**

“The wicked borrow and do not repay, but the righteous give generously” (Psalm 37:21). “Do not say to your neighbor, ‘Come back later; I’ll give it tomorrow’ – when you now have it with you” (Proverbs 3:28).

**AVOID THE BONDAGE OF DEBT**

“The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender” (Proverbs 22:7).

**DEBT PRESUMES ON THE FUTURE**

“Now listen, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.’ Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes” (James 4:13-14).

**DEBT CAN DENY GOD THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK IN OUR LIVES AND TEACH US VALUABLE LESSONS**

God may wish to show us his love by providing us with something we desire but for which we have no resources. If we go into debt to get it anyway, we deny him that opportunity (see Luke 12:22-32). In the same way that parents refrain from giving a child everything the child wants because parents know it isn’t in the child’s best interest, incurring debt can rob God of the opportunity to teach us through denial. Ecclesiastes 7:14 reminds us: “When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider: God has made the one as well as the other.”

**DEBT CAN FOSTER ENVY AND GREED**

“Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own” (Luke 12:15 NLT).

**GIVE AND PAY WHAT YOU OWE**

“Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority” (Romans 13:7 NLT).

**DON’T CO-SIGN**

“Don’t agree to guarantee another person’s debt or put up security for someone else. If you can’t pay it, even your bed will be snatched from under you” (Proverbs 22:26-27 NLT).

**DEBT CAN DISRUPT SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law” (Galatians 5:22-23).

## Spending

The Prudent Consumer – One who enjoys the fruits of their labor yet guards against materialism.

### BEWARE OF IDOLS

“You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below” (Deuteronomy 5:8). Materialism – which so saturates our culture – is nothing less than a competing theology in which matter (things) is of ultimate significance; that is, things become gods or idols. “They ... worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator” (Romans 1:25).

### GUARD AGAINST GREED; THINGS DO NOT BRING HAPPINESS

“...Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own” (Luke 12:15, NLT).

### SEEK MODERATION

“...Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the LORD?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God” (Proverbs 30:8-9).

### BE CONTENT

“I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:12-13).

“...Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that” (1 Timothy 6:6-8).

### DON'T WASTE GOD'S RESOURCES

“When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, ‘Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted’” (John 6:12).

### ENJOY A PORTION OF GOD'S PROVISION

“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life” (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

### WATCH YOUR FINANCES (BUDGET)

“Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; for riches do not endure forever, and a crown is not secure for all generations” (Proverbs 27:23-24).

## Annexure 2: Spending plan

<b>Earnings/Income Per Month</b>		<b>Totals</b>		
Salary #1	R -		<b>6. Insurance</b> (paid by you) R -	
Salary #2	R -		Car	R -
Other	R -		Homeowners	R -
			Life Assurance	R -
			Medical Aid	R -
			Other Policies	R -
<b>Total Monthly Income</b>		R -		
			<b>7. Household/Personal</b> R -	
<b>1. Giving</b>		R -	Groceries/Cleaning/Meat	R -
Church	R -		Clothes/Dry Cleaning	R -
Missions	R -		Gifts	R -
Other Contributions	R -		<b>Household Items Personal:</b>	
			Liquour/Tobacco	R -
<b>2. Saving</b>		R -	Cosmetics	R -
Emergency	R -		Hair dresser/Beauty	R -
Replacement	R -		<b>Other:</b>	
Long Term	R -		Books/Magazines/Newspapers	R -
			Allowances	R -
<b>3. Debt</b>		R -	Music Lessons	R -
			Personal Technology	R -
<b>Credit Cards:</b>			Education	R -
Credit Card 1	R -		Extra Mural Activities	R -
Credit Card 2	R -		Miscellaneous	R -
Credit Card 3	R -			
Petrol Card	R -		<b>8. Entertainment</b> R -	
Clothing Accounts	R -		<b>Going Out:</b>	
Other Accounts	R -		Meals	R -
<b>Education Loans</b>	R -		Movies/Events	R -
<b>Other Loans:</b>	R -		Baby-sitting	R -
Bank Loans	R -		<b>Travel (holidays/outings)</b>	R -
Family/Friends	R -		<b>Other:</b>	
Other	R -		Fitness/Sport	R -
			Hobbies	R -
<b>4. Housing</b>		R -	Movies/DVD's	R -
Bond/Rent	R -			
Maintenance/Repairs	R -		<b>9. Professional Services</b> R -	
Rates & Taxes	R -		Child care	R -
Electricity	R -		Medical/Dental	R -
Water/Refuse Removal	R -		<b>Other:</b>	
Telephone	R -		Legal	R -
Cell Phones	R -		Counselling	R -
Internet	R -		Professional Dues	R -
DSTV/MNET/TV Licence	R -			
Garden Service	R -		<b>10. Misc. Small Cash Expenses</b> R -	
Laundry Service	R -		Total Misc. Expenses	R -
Other	R -			
<b>5. Transport</b>		R -		
Car payments/License	R -			
Bus/Train/Taxi	R -			
Petrol/Parking	R -			
Oil/Maintenance	R -			

<b>Total Monthly Income</b>	R -
<b>Less Total Expenses</b>	R -
Income Over/(Under) Expenses	R -



### Gift list

Here's an often overlooked or underestimated part of spending. Write the names of individuals you will be purchasing gifts for in the coming year, as well as the amounts you typically spend on each occasion. Remember to include cards, postage at Christmas, etc. You may wish to include some money for as yet unannounced weddings, etc.

	Name	Birthday	Christmas	Anniversary	Other
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					
18.					
19.					
20.					
	<b>Total</b>				

**GRAND TOTAL** of all columns: R \_\_\_\_\_

**MONTHLY AVERAGE** (Total ÷ 12) R \_\_\_\_\_

What I Owe				What I Own (Optional)	
I Owe (Liabilities)	Amount	Minimum Monthly Payment	Interest Percentage	I Own (assets)	Amount
Bond (current Balance)				Cheque Account	
Personal Loans				Savings Account	
Credit Card 1				Other Savings	
Credit Card 2				Assurance / Policies (cash value)	
Credit Card 3				Retirement (annuities/pensions)	
Credit Card 4				Home (market value)	
Car loans				Car (market value)	
Education Loans				Second Car (market value)	
Family/Friends				Other possessions (estimate)	
Other				Money Owed to me	
Clothing Accounts				Other	
Hire Purchase agreement				Other	
<b>Total of All I Owe</b>				<b>Total of all I Own</b>	

Net Worth (optional)

(Total of All I Own - Total of All I Owe = Net Worth (in earthly terms, not God's) \*

\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_

\*Never confuse your self-worth with your net worth. In God's eyes each one of us is of infinite worth.

## **Annexure 6: Spending record**



## References

Andre, E., 1997. *Living the Responsible Life (A Sane Approach toward Biblically-based Stewardship)*. Unpublished.

Morris, R. 2002. *The Blessed Life*. Regal Books.

Stanley, A. 2008. Take it to the Limit DVD. *Financial Margin*.

Willow Creek Association, 2001. *Good Sense*. Willow Creek Association.

## Useful websites

[www.generousgiving.org](http://www.generousgiving.org)

[www.generouslife.info](http://www.generouslife.info)

[www.crown.org](http://www.crown.org)

[www.daveramsey.com](http://www.daveramsey.com)

[http://www.goodsenseministry.com/resources/curriculum\\_budget\\_course.asp](http://www.goodsenseministry.com/resources/curriculum_budget_course.asp)

## Course Evaluation

In what ways did the course meet or not meet your expectations?

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Were you able to complete the draft of your spending plan? If not, do you have what you need to do so on your own in the days ahead? If not, what are you missing?

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In what ways will your financial behavior change as a result of the course?

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What were 2 or 3 of the major insights or learnings you received?

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In what ways might the facilitator have been more helpful?

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How could conditions in the room have been improved?

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Additional comments or suggestions

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